Purchase of pilotless planes from Israel

1867. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to purchase Hermes-450s and the Searcher-III models pilotless planes from Israel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether demonstration flights of these planes have been held;

(d) if so, the results thereof;

(e) whether development of the Lakshya and Nishant Pilotless Target Aircrafts have been running behind the schedule;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) by when the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE "FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) Lakshya-(Pilotless Target Aircraft) The development project has already been completed successfully.

Nishant-The development program has suffered some delays.

(f) and (g) The Nishant project is now expected to be completed in 2001. The main reasons for the delay are technological problems associated with indigenous developments.

Rehabilitation of Martyr's Families Killed During Kargil War

1868. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of E»EFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken for rehabilitation of the families of those killed during the Kargil war;

(b) whether it includes any monetary compensation as well; and if so, the amount thereof; and

(c) whether Government have monitored the actual implementation of these measures; if so, the result of the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The widows or the next of kin of the Armed Forces personnel killed in Kargil operation have been paid an ex-gratia amount of Rs. 10 lakhs each. They have been sanctioned liberalized family pension equal to the last pay drawn by the deceased personnel have been granted Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity as admissible under the rules.

The families of such deceased Defence personnel have also been given following benefits from the National Defence Fund and Army Central Welfare Fund:—

NATIONAL DEFENCE FUND

(i) Grant for Children Education: Rs. 1 lakh per child, subject to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs per family. The amount has been made available to the concerned Regimental Centres for depositing the same in long-term fixed deposit. The interest earned from such deposit is made available to the widow or the children for education. The principal amount would be made available to the child at the conclusion of his/her education.

(ii) Financial Assistance to Parents: Dependent parent of the deceased soldiers are to be paid monthly interest accruing from a fixed deposit of Rs. 1.20 lakhs per family. It has since been decided to increase this amount to Rs. 2.00 lakhs per family.

(iii) Housing Grant: A sum of Rs. 5 lakhs is given to all the war widows/NOK (in case the deceased Defence Personnel was a bachelor) and to those Defence personnel invalidated out of service due to war injuries, for construction/acquisition of a dwelling unit or for renovation, modification/addition of the existing dwelling unit on the land provided by the State Government or on his/her own land.

ARMY CENTRAL WELFARE FUND:

A sum of Rs. 30,000/- has been paid to next of kin of each deceased Armed Forces personnel.

PETROLEUM PRODUCT AGENCIES:

A special scheme for direct allotment of 500 oil product agencies to the next of kin of those killed in Kargil operation was announced. Under this scheme applications from 42S widows/next of kin have been received. Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas have approved allotment of oil product agencies in 281 cases. The remaining 144 cases are in the process.

HOUSES BY THE DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY:

Delhi Development Authority have formulated a scheme named 'Vijayee Veer Awas Yojna' in New Delhi for providing dwelling units for the families of officers and jawans killed in operation and to those disabled. Under this scheme 134 flats have already been allotted.

Purchase of Hover crafts for Navy

1869. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to purchase Hovercrafts for Coast Guards; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Government have approved procurement of 6 Hovercrafts for the Coast Guard at a cost of Rs. 49.17 crores on 6th April, 1999. These Hovercrafts are to be supplied by M/s GRSE, Calcutta. The first Hovercraft is likely to be delivered by the end of August, 2000. The deliveries of the remaining Hovercrafts are scheduled to be made in a phased manner and completed by January, 2002. The Hovercrafts are to be deployed in shallow waters for keeping surveillance in the areas to prevent poaching, smuggling, etc. by undesirable elements.